

REMARKS

Claims 2, 3, 6 – 10 and 12 are pending in the application. Claims 2, 3, 6 – 10 and 12 have been rejected.

Claims 6 – 10 and 12 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,411,685 (O'Neal) in view of Joyce. Claims 6-10 and 12 have been cancelled to facilitate issuance of the patent.

Claims 2-3 are unamended herein but applicant swears behind the effective priority date of the reference under which claims 2-3 are rejected, thus removing such reference as applicable prior art.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

I. Declaration To Overcome A Prior Invention

Claims 2 – 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,694,000 (Ung, et al.), in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,381,316 (Joyce, et al.) cited on the Ung patent.

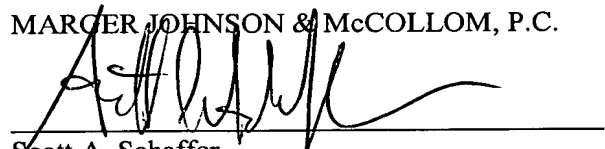
The Ung, et al. patent has a filing date ("Effective Date") of April 11, 2000. Although the filing date of the instant application is March 4, 2002, Applicants of the instant application conceived of the invention that is the subject of the claims prior to the Effective Date of the Ung patent. Attached is an affidavit under 37 CFR §1.131 signed by an authorized representative of the Assignee, attesting to a conception date prior to the Ung filing date of April 11, 2000, together with corroborating documents evidencing such conception.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and allowance of claims 2 and 3 of the application as amended is solicited. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned at (503) 222-3613 if it appears that an interview would be helpful in advancing the case.

Respectfully submitted,

MARGER JOHNSON & McCOLLOM, P.C.



Scott A. Schaffer
Reg. No. 38,610

MARGER JOHNSON & McCOLLOM, P.C.
210 SW Morrison Street, Suite 400
Portland, Oregon 97204
Telephone: 503-222-3613
Customer No. 20575